



Pictured victorious after their win at The Spastics Society's national swimming gala, held at Crystal Palace Sports Stadium on March 2nd, are the Thomas Delarue School's Junior Relay Team. They are: Steven Kerry, Peter Chadwick, Antony Griffin and Ian Johnson.

Over 120 competitors from 11 schools and organisations up and down the country took part in a total of 36 different races with many more heats. Valence School scooped the pool with 33 firsts, Delarue were second with 22 firsts, and Bristol Spastics Association were third with 21 firsts.

More than 150 friends, parents and teachers came to watch the five-hour gala. Life-savers, timekeepers and helpers were provided by Nonnington P.E. College.

Full story, list of winners, and more pictures in the next issue of Spastics News.

Holiday was like a dream come true

LINDA Sargent, a 12-year-old pupil of The Spastics Society's Willfred Pickles School, took her family on a dream holiday to the United States last month.

Linda did it by first winning a painting competition sponsored by Pye, the electronics firm. Her picture of a rose in a vase, which she painted with a brush held in her mouth, won the disabled children's section. But the prize, 12 days in Florida at Walt Disney's World was for Linda and her parents only. Well-wishers of the family, who live in Hockley, Essex, rallied round and raised the necessary extra cash for Linda's twin sister Ruth, and little brother, six-year-old Colin.

Mrs. Sargent said before they boarded a plane: "It is like a dream come true. My husband and I have not been able to afford an overseas trip all our married life. And it was also too difficult to take Linda away in her wheelchair."

The money was raised by football matches and folk concerts, and Linda's father, Jim, said: "I don't know how to thank everyone."

Vera was looking for a job—but found a husband

WHEN spastic Vera Panchuk descended the steps to the basement office of Arthur Carr's Rehabilitation and Employment Advisory Service in London, she was searching for a job.

Instead she found a husband!

Vera, aged 43, was joint winner of a section of The Spastics Society's literary contest in 1971 and lives on Stamford Hill Estate, N.16. She wrote a moving essay on peasant life in the Ukraine, for her father was Russian and her mother Lithuanian.

But since her meeting with Mrs. Mary Wilson, who presented the prize, Vera's life has been hard. Her disablement has meant that since leaving school at the age of 16 she has only worked nine months mak-

ing artificial flowers, and that was in 1947. First her mother died, and then recently her father, and she went to Mr. Carr to find work. Mr. Carr, who specialises in finding jobs for people whom society writes off, circularised a number of firms.

One of the circulars was seen by Mr. Pat Webb, an accounts clerk with the famous Fox Photo Agency in Farringdon Street.

Mr. Webb, a 55-year-old bachelor, said: "When I saw it I instinctively guessed Vera was my kind of person. It was just intuition. I wrote to Mr. Carr explaining that I would like to meet Vera, and left it at that. I just thought in terms of friendship—I never dreamt we would fall in love."

So Mr. Carr unwittingly turned Cupid, for he sent off Pat's letter advising her to think carefully before she decided.

The result was that Vera and Pat met for the first time in

Continued on Back Page



Shedding pounds to raise £'s

FOR three concentrated weeks the good people of Shrewsbury have known what it is like to suffer going without that extra spoonful of sugar in their tea and waving away the cream buns. For 129 plump but charity-conscious citizens have been on a sponsored "Slim-in."

Organised by the Shropshire Spastics Society and sponsored by the local paper, the Shrewsbury Chronicle, they have been shedding pounds to raise £'s. The going rate was 2½p per half pound and the "Slim-in" was stringently administered by the local Chief Inspector of Weights and Measures, Bob Holdaway, who weighed in the contestants. The winner of the male section was a stout-hearted fellow who started off at 19 stone 11 lbs. and raised £96 by going down 21 lbs., and the winner of the female section, who shyly declined either to reveal her start or finish weights, raised £75. They are each entitled to a prize of £5.

Only one thing has defeated every mathematician in Shrewsbury, and that is calculating just how much "too, too solid flesh" melted away to make the grand sum of money raised—which looks like being £1,000.

Pop pals

Riding high in the picture below are Jim Lea, Dave Hill, Noddy Holder and Don Powell of the chart-topping Slade pop group, who turned the official opening of a special care unit for handicapped children into a swinging occasion. Story and more pictures on Page 5.

There's no news like old news...



They don't write stories like that any more! Staff members Genevieve McHugo, Anne Plummer, Mary Jurawan, and Sue Towns read all the news that was fit to print 65 years ago.

ALL sorts of items are presented for sale in The Spastics shops—models of china dogs, dolls and clothing are not uncommon.

But every so often a well-wisher brings a gift that is both unusual and valuable. Recently an elderly man called in at the Camberwell Green Gift Shop in London with a bundle of old music sheets. Manageress Jean Strickland started sorting through them, and to her surprise came up with a collector's item.

It is a copy of the Daily Graphic in almost perfect condition, dated July 26, 1909, and its front page story is about Bleriot's record making flight across the Channel.

It was the first-ever flight of what the writer called a "heavier than air" machine, and the journey "occupied" 23 minutes.

Before war

It has made fascinating reading for the Society's staff, for, although the First World War was still five years away, some things have not changed much in the intervening 65 years.

The Daily Graphic, which then cost 1d a copy, has long since disappeared, but the price of this particular copy will have increased enormously.

Said John Tough, The Spastics Society's Head of Marketing: "We're not sure of the value of it, but we are having it priced because it could be worth anything between 50p and £50 to someone interested in old papers."



The front page of the paper which will be sold to a collector to raise money for spastics.

Radio aid for Linda

DURING the same week in which Linda Berwick won The Spastics Society's Achievement Award (full story on Pages 6 and 7), Capital Radio launched an appeal to raise money for the East London handicapped club of which she is chairman.

This independent commercial broadcasting station, which operates in the London area, plans to help buy a hydraulic tail gate ambulance for transporting heavily handicapped club members, with money raised on its Capital Snowball charity scheme.

DJ Tommy Vance started the appeal by offering one of his shoelaces, and such items as a portable television and a silver charm bracelet were sent in by the public as a result of the broadcasts.

Linda herself spoke on the air about the club every day during the appeal.

"Care for ourselves" week-end was great success

AN experimental self-catering week-end held by the 14 residents at the Society's Cardiff Adult House Unit has proved a great success.

For two days the residents took over the running of the unit completely, with no assistance from staff.

At a meeting held beforehand, the residents shared out the chores amongst themselves. Everybody had a job to do suited to his or her ability and the less severely disabled took over the personal care of those who needed help.

Jean vacuumed the lounge, dusted and helped with the washing-up, while Joyce saw that everybody had their correct drugs.

Tony did most of the cooking, assisted by Joyce and Lyn. The main meal on Saturday consisted of sausages, boiled potatoes, sprouts and gravy, followed by fruit salad with tinned milk. On Sunday they ate roast beef, roast potatoes, beans and carrots, with rice pudding as sweet.

Although everybody felt very tired by Sunday evening, the residents are hoping to repeat the experiment at some future date and all are confident that they could look after themselves in a case of staff emergency.

Rochdale's gift to workers

ROCHDALE and District Spastics Society, Lancashire, has presented a new drilling machine to The Spastics Society's North Manchester Work Centre.

The £75 half-inch machine was handed over to the Centre by Mr. M. G. Nott, Chairman of the Rochdale group. It will make a valuable addition to the equipment at the Centre, which has 44 spastic employees, occupied mainly on sub-contract engineering work.

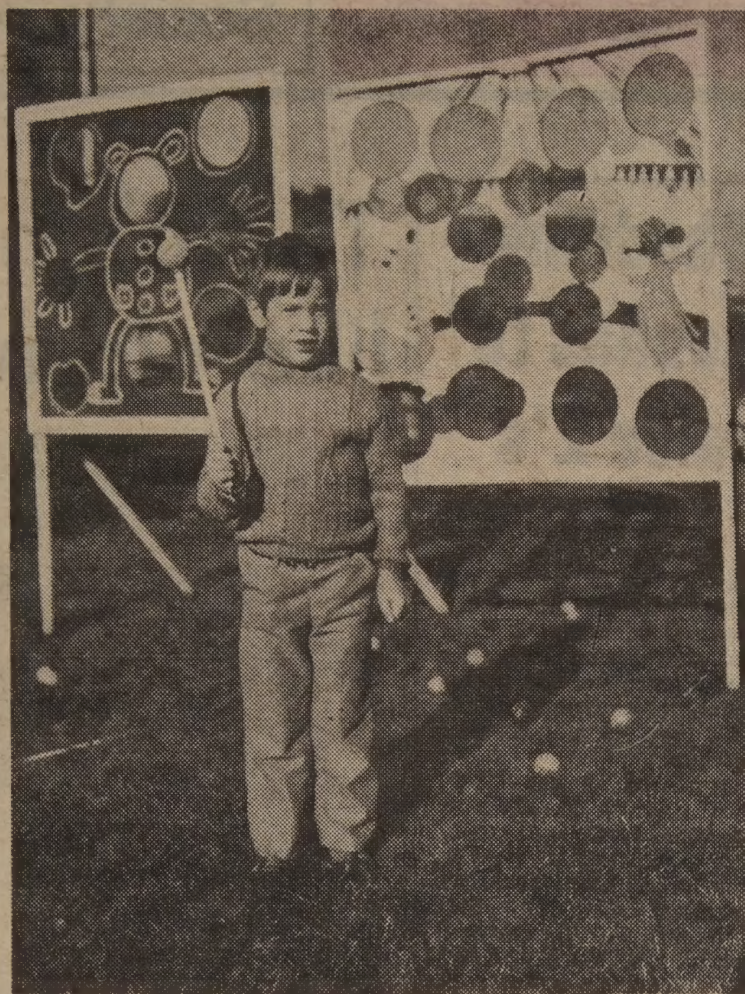


A TOTAL of £730 was raised at a Heather Ball organised by the Ponteland Spastics Group in aid of the Percy Hedley School for Spastics, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

The group has raised over £2,000 for the school since its formation about three years ago, and the money from the latest function will be used to re-furnish the girls' dormitories.

The 240 guests at the ball were entertained with a cabaret given by Ayshea Brough

'Flik'—and a new fad is airborne



ABOVE: "Flikstik" at the ready, this exponent stands ready to start a contest. RIGHT: The boards, once set up, provide a colourful target for devotees of the "Flikball" fad which is growing in special schools throughout the country.

YOUNG Alistair came back from his first day at school bursting with news. "I've learnt a new game," he told his parents, "it's called handball. You throw the ball by hand."

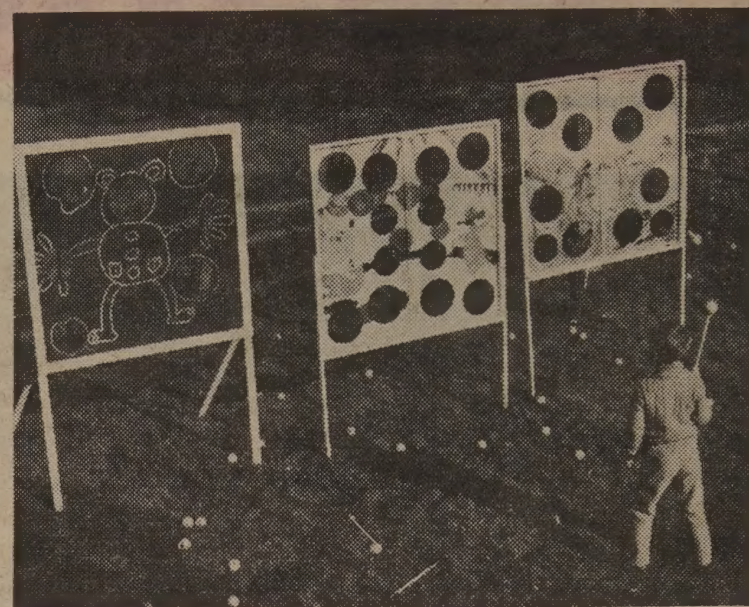
For Alistair's father, inventor John Rinfrett, had designed a revolutionary ball game called 'Flikball' and Alistair had been an enthusiastic "Flikball" player since he was big enough to pick up the stick.

John Rinfrett works on the "flick" principle and, on the premise you can flick just about anything, has designed devices which can simply amuse to one that saves life.

"Flikball" itself started off as a game for children. A feather-light, hollow plastic ball weighing about half an ounce, the size of a tennis ball, has a hole in the centre. The stick is 18 inches long and goes into the ball—a flick and the game is on.

Because it is flicked, the ball travels considerably further than a hand thrown one, and because the ball is light the game can be played indoors as well as out.

What John Rinfrett had not bargained on was the immense popularity of the game with handicapped children and those who cared for them. All but the most helpless children can enjoy it. The lightness of the ball and the fact that it can be easily retrieved from the ground with the stick makes it a game for children with little



strength in their hands and arms, confined to a wheelchair.

The basic "Flikball" set contains a ball and two sticks, and can be bought from Boots for 75p. There is also a £30 kit for schools and organisations. It comprises a four-foot square target on legs, like a blackboard and easel, 50 balls and 10 sticks. They are now being used by schools for handicapped children throughout the country.

"Funnily enough," said John's wife, Margaret, "we found that schools with a predominance of women on the staff were far more imaginative with the game than men. The target has holes in it for the balls to go through and the men would leave it at that. Women would decorate the

board with numbers to make it a counting game or words to help children with their spelling. They have all sorts of ideas."

One big advantage of the game is that it not only exercises muscles which would otherwise be unused through lack of strength, it also improves co-ordination and also, very valuably, allows children of different degrees of disability to compete on the same level.

John, who runs the engineering firm Balcan, in Lincolnshire, has gone on to develop an important contribution to life-saving at sea. He uses the "Flik stick" to propel a life-line coiled inside a bright orange plastic bottle.

Why the right toys are so important

AN exhibition of play equipment and toys for handicapped people was held at the King's Fund Centre in London recently.

The exhibition emphasised the play needs of the subnormal and underlined the fact that a mentally handicapped adult can enjoy playing with toys intended for the average five, seven or 10-year-old if the playthings are built solidly enough to withstand the adult's superior strength.

Most of the toys shown had been selected by experts from normal trade ranges, but a few were specially designed for the handicapped.

Young babies and the very severely disabled need toys that encourage focusing of eyes, listening, feeling, clutching and sucking. Mobiles, a non-glass

baby mirror, rattles and soft toys were shown in this range, plus items with a surprise elements such as pop-up toys which stimulate a sense of curiosity in the severely mentally handicapped.

Even those who can make only slight or clumsy movements find that inflatable play equipment will respond to the lightest touch. For the more physically active a hand-operated cart, rocking horse or baby walker, will give a sense of movement.

Those cut off by hospital living from everyday life are greatly helped by "Let's Pretend" games with realistic household equipment, dolls' houses, dressing-up clothes and toy shops.

Sometimes anti-social behaviour can be channelled creatively through play. Children who throw things about can be encouraged to throw balls into a box, or to aim at plastic skittles. Tapping a drum may prove to be more fun than scratching; blowing bubbles or inflating differently shaped balloons can be more fun than spitting.

For spastics, the "doing" toys such as large jigsaws and construction sets will help co-ordination and the development of manual skills.

The exhibition also included a "Do-It-Yourself" section of toys made by nurses, teachers and parents, to suit individual handicaps. Amongst these were three board games, devised by Mr. Pettican of the Society's Craig-y-Parc School in Wales.

Mr. William D. Boggs, a 49-year-old spastic, died in a night-time fire at his Huddersfield home last month. At the inquest a neighbour was reported as saying that he knew Mr. Boggs smoked in bed a good deal.

The Coroner recorded a verdict that Mr. Boggs died accidentally from shock due to burns.

Our inside story on the Open University

"YOU'RE mad!" said my examination conscious school teacher friends, "studying at evening classes all these years with nothing to show for it."

So I decided to enrol for the Open University. Then, by December 1973 I began to wish I hadn't, as bulky envelopes crashed through the letter-box at almost every post.

This was mainly course material—the actual "lessons," and they might have been written in Medieval Serbo-Croat for all the sense I could make of them. There were also terrifying graphs to be filled in for the computer and, viewing these, I realised with horror that now we're only a decade away from Orwell's 1984.

Afterwards the handbook and other explanatory material arrived and things gradually began to take on some kind of meaning. I was allocated to a tutor and a counsellor—the latter with a reassuringly familiar-sounding name like Derek Carter.

Knob twiddling

Then an urgent yellow paper came, saying that the date of the introductory meeting for new students at the Study Centre might have to be altered because of the power crisis. We were instructed to listen to local radio stations for possible last-minute announcements. This entailed some frantic manoeuvring of the tuning switch, hitherto rarely moved from Radio 4. I caught some fascinating snippets of chat, but usually found too late that I was tuned in to the wrong channel. However, as it turned out, there were no alterations in the scheduled timetable.

Then the great day came when I set out in pouring rain and gale-force winds for the induction meeting. I said induction, not seduction! Though I must admit it had been a problem to decide what to wear. A dowdy, spinterish appearance could indicate a slovenly mind, unresponsive to new ideas. On the other hand, too much emphasis on clothes and make-up might look frivolous.

In the end I settled for a long skirt, polo-necked sweater and tank top (mainly for warmth, as I had to go to the meeting straight from our freezing office).

It proved a suitable choice, as long skirts were almost a uniform among the younger female element. My fellow-students seemed a mixed bag

—the same assortment that one meets at most evening classes. Many, I think, were as nervous as I was. I saw one man's hands shaking visibly as he leafed through some papers before the meeting began, and I caught a strong whiff of Scotch (Dutch courage?) from another neighbour. As for me, I was dosed up to the eyebrows with tranquillizers, lest my athetoid fidgets should disturb those in the row behind.

No wallflowers

Situated near the front of any auditorium, I feel horribly conspicuous, but if I sit too far back it is difficult to hear. You can't win. Having arrived early on this occasion, I settled myself unobtrusively by a wall at the end of the third row, but even this strategy was in vain as we spent most of the evening playing a kind of General Post while we split into small groups, reformed, and divided again to meet tutors and counsellors.

I was momentarily startled to find the very English-sounding Mr. Carter was of distinctly Asian origins, but his friendly manner and delightful sense of humour soon put us all at ease.

His group of students included the only other obviously-disabled person there—a blind woman with a guide dog. The dog seemed to know more about what was going on than most of the students. "Don't worry!" was our counsellor's reassuring theme, "Don't be put off by the avalanche of paper-work. It'll soon sort itself out. You don't have to spend every spare moment studying. If you want to watch 'Z-Cars' go ahead and do so, without feeling guilty. And if you're the slightest bit concerned about anything, remember that I'm just at the other end of the telephone."

The tutor was equally encouraging about the academic syllabus. He was a dear—a gentle, fragile-looking young man with sympathetic brown eyes and a genuine delight at the prospect of sharing his knowledge with others.

"Here we go again!" moaned my Spastics News colleague in tones of acute boredom when I told her about the tutor next morning. But as I pointed out, he was probably almost young enough to be my son.

Anyway, at least this meeting proved that the Open University is about real people, not just a soul-less computer disgorging an endless stream of printed matter to confuse and dismay the poor student.

Anne Plummer

(Spastics News reporter who promises further reports in her quest for academic honours).



How dancing became a hobby for everyone

WHHEELCHAIR dancing started eight years ago in a Spastics Society school, to enable those people in wheelchairs to enjoy a form of dancing as a leisure activity. Its popularity has now increased to such an extent that there are about 33 teams, comprising of 450 people, who now dance regularly. Many of these teams also take part in the National Festival of Wheelchair Dancing which is held every year at the Hammersmith Palais and give demonstrations of dancing in their areas. Wheelchair dancing is also enjoyed in other parts of the world and soon there is to be a world festival.

The dances range from the many types of country to the more familiar ballroom dances,

such as the Waltz and Valeta. As far as possible the steps are the same as those used in ordinary dancing. Therefore, those in chairs are able to dance alongside ordinary partners. The different styles and speeds of the various dances allow people with varying degrees of handicap to participate. For the people who have no difficulty in moving their chairs the choice of dances is pretty well unlimited, but for those people who have more difficulty or who use their feet the slightly slower dances are often more suitable.

The Bristol group, pictured above, is known as the Kingsley Dancers. They meet every Wednesday evening at Kingsley Hall and, with the help of their

instructor, are busy practising for this year's festival. The group was formed about 18 months ago. Last year they attended their first festival, where they won a trophy with a dance they wrote themselves, and a second place in the set dance section when they danced the St. Bernard Waltz, the Meeting Six and the Black Nag.

During the day most of the team attend the Dovercourt Road work centre, others are in various types of employment. The degree of handicaps in the team also varies, some push the chair with their hands, others use their feet, while others use a combination of all their limbs.

Anne Trotman



Dennis Heslop of Coventry discussing his first prize in a rugby league competition for Spastics Pool supporters with, left, Derek Hudson, Director of Top Ten Travel, and Alan Pinfold of Qantas Airways. The prize—two first class tickets for an around-the-world trip on Qantas Airways, plus £2,000 to cover accommodation and expenses.

Dennis has the opportunity of spending days in such exciting places as Greece, India, Hong Kong, Australia, Tahiti and Mexico.

HOLIDAYS

The Bournemouth, Poole and District Spastics Society is offering "Bargain Holiday Weeks" during April and May at their three caravans. These are sited at the Isle of Wight, Rockley Sands and Holton Heath. The rent during these spring months will be £10 per week. Please contact Mrs. O. M. Nelson, Group Secretary, Bournemouth, Poole and District Spastics Society, Edward House, Talbot Drive, Parkstone, Poole, Dorset BH12 5ED.



Manchester City players Tony Towers and Willie Donachie hand over the keys of a Vauxhall Victor to Miss Kathleen Knowles, Green Street, Manchester, who qualified for one of the first prizes in the Motor Show Competition for Spastics Pool supporters. Miss Knowles was able to celebrate her success with the case of wine which she won in the same competition.

Splashes from the Spastics Pool

PICTURE RIGHT: Miss Jayne Ball of Enys Road, Eastbourne, Sussex, has won the Spastics Charm Girl of the Year final competition which was featured on the Spastics Pool weekly bulletin. Her prize is a Vauxhall Viva car. Both runners-up, Miss Alice McHugh of North Road, Belfast, and Mrs. G. Iceton of Welham Close, North Nymms, Hatfield, receive colour television sets.

During 1973 the 10 finalists had each won their own area Charm Girl competition for Spastics Pool supporters.



PICTURE LEFT: John Osman, Director of Top Ten Travel, being congratulated on winning 24 lbs. of Irish steak by Terry Long, representative of the Irish Tourist Board. The steak was John Osman's prize in a competition which was held during the Associated British Travel Agents' conference in Palma, Majorca.

Also featured are Julie Weeks of Aer Lingus, and Mr. H. Filer Manager of the butchery department of Fine Fare in Knowle, Bristol.

More gifts for Oakwood students

IN the January issue of *Spastics News* we published the picture of a colour television set being handed over to the Society's Oakwood Centre, Essex, following a sponsored wheelchair push.

The final total received from sponsors amounted to £469.39. After the purchase and installation of the television set, plus other items such as track suits for the students, a radio and torches, there was £105 left over. This money will be spent on a gift to be chosen by the Oakwood students.



Richard Maler, Secretary of the Wales Council for the Disabled, receives a cheque for £250 from Derek Hoskins, Regional Manager for Top Ten Promotions. The donation, made by the Good Neighbours Trust, will enable 118 disabled persons and their helpers to holiday in Spain in September. Pictured centre is David Winters of Port Talbot, who, apart from being a member of

the Executive Council for the British Sports Association and the Executive Committee for the Wales Council for the Disabled, is an international athlete.

Captain of the Welsh paraplegic team in New Zealand in January, during his career David has won a total of 84 medals in sabre fencing, archery, table tennis and bowls. This includes 10 golds at international level in sabre fencing.

Hints for helpers

THE British Red Cross Society has issued a useful booklet called "People in Wheelchairs — hints for helpers."

This 24-page illustrated publication contains sections on standard wheelchairs and others with special features, negotiating the chairs up and down different levels, a list of do's and don'ts, and hints on maintenance. The booklet ends with a list of further sources of information for the disabled themselves or their relatives.

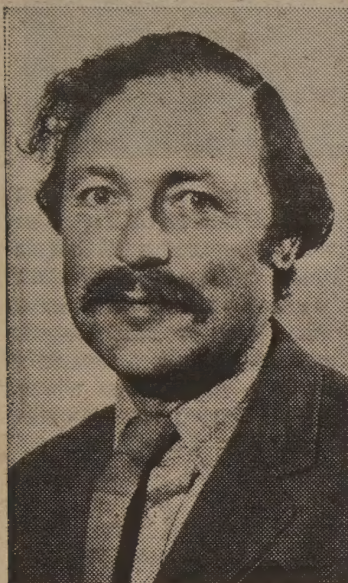
Individual wheelchair users have advised in the preparation of the book, as have various organisations concerned with the disabled.

Copies are available at 13p, plus postage, from British Red Cross County Branches, or the Stores and Supply Department, B.R.C.S., 4 Grosvenor Crescent, SW1X 7EQ.

Two important new appointments at headquarters

TWO new appointments have been made by the Executive Council of The Spastics Society, which will have the effect of forging even closer links between voluntary workers and headquarters staff. Mr. Derek Lancaster-Gaye has become Director of Resources, and Mr. R. A. Norton has joined the Society as Director of Appeals and Information.

Mr. Lancaster-Gaye is already well known to readers of Spastics News as the Society's Assistant Director, Services, a position he has held for six years. In this capacity



Mr. Lancaster-Gaye has he had overall responsibility for all direct services to spastics, from the major developments such as the planning of new centres for children and adults, to the individual help provided to spastics and their families by the Social Work and Employment Department.

His new Division of Resources will incorporate the work in the Regions and the activities of the Society's local groups, and this, says Mr. Lancaster-Gaye, will mean a close relationship between professional staff and voluntary workers, especially in the planning of new services. And knowing that the work of an active, go-ahead local group is the best hope for improved services for spastics in each area, he is planning the creation of more groups in the future.

Integration

Mr. Lancaster-Gaye believes that the disabled must be given every opportunity for full integration within the community. The success of the Society-sponsored Habinteg housing scheme at Haringey, London, where 25 per cent of the homes are allocated to the disabled, has particularly pleased him, as it is tangible proof of his belief that when given the right circumstances, handicapped people can live independent lives in normal society.

Freedom of choice for spastics is vitally important, he believes, and he is very much in favour of residents in Society centres being offered the chance of more decision-making. The able-bodied take the right of making their own decisions for granted, he says, for the disabled the right to choose means an enrichment of the quality of life.

Sports

Sport for the disabled is another enthusiasm, and from Mr. Lancaster-Gaye's original idea for the first National Games for Spastics in England has grown an international movement with similar events being held in France, Germany and Sweden. This year International Spastics Games will be held in London, with competi-

tors travelling from Europe, Asia and America to take part. Mr. Lancaster-Gaye is Chairman of the International Cerebral Palsy Society's Sports and Leisure Committee.

Mr. Lancaster-Gaye joined the Society 13 years ago as local centres secretary, and in his first year of office he travelled over 40,000 miles and attended at least one meeting of every local group. Previously he had been General Secretary of the Medical Practitioners' Union, and worked in hospital administration both in Britain and abroad.

In recent years, Mr. Lancaster-Gaye has presented papers on the latest developments in the care of the handicapped to professional gatherings all over the world, but in spite of a crowded working life with one charity, he has found time to serve another with membership of the management committee of a Cheshire Home in Kent.



Mr. Norton

Mr. Reginald Norton, appointed as the Director of Appeals and Information, has joined the Society after a career as an international business executive, a man of whom the Financial Times once said that he used aeroplanes "the way other people use buses."

His varied experience as an advertising executive and international sales director means that he is uniquely qualified for his new position in charge of a Division which includes the Society's essential fund-raising activities — everything from direct mail appeals to gift shops — and the information services which project the story of the

Society to the Press and public.

Since joining the Society in February, Mr. Norton has been visiting centres and workshops for spastics throughout the country, "looking, listening and learning," as he describes it. One of his first engagements was to attend a gathering of local group Press officers at Castle Priory Staff College, where, he says, he was highly impressed with the enthusiasm of the volunteers who attended to pool ideas with the Society's professional journalists.

Satisfaction

Working for a national charity which must operate as efficiently as any business concern — and even more so — offers, says Mr. Norton, a particular satisfaction. "I have not been at headquarters long," he told Spastics News, "but I can already see that at the end of the working day it is probably even more personally rewarding to be able to say, 'Today I have achieved something for spastics,' rather than 'Today I have achieved profits for shareholders.'"

"In the commercial world my responsibility was to shareholders who entrusted their investment to the company. Now I have an even greater responsibility to those who I regard as shareholders of the Society — all those spastic children and adults for whom we care."

When he left school, Mr. Norton first chose a career in banking, but after service as a Royal Air Force Navigator he joined S. H. Benson, the advertising agency, and was concerned with a number of international accounts. He subsequently worked with the Dunlop Rubber Company and the International Chemical Company Ltd., where he was sales manager of overseas operations. He joined Carreras Ltd. in 1966 and became Director of both exports and overseas companies.

From Carreras, Mr. Norton went to the Macdonald Tobacco Company as Vice-President, and led extensive sales drives all over the world, including the People's Republic of China.

Young people

Not surprisingly for a man who has spent such a large proportion of his working life on the move around the world, Mr. Norton is keenly interested in international affairs, while his hobbies are as widely differing as sea angling and stamp collecting.

He is married, with a daughter of 18 and a son of 16, and with two teenagers of his own at home to "test market" new ideas, he is keenly interested in the drive to involve more young people in the national movement for spastics.

HOPES FOR NEW GROUP AT MILTON KEYNES

A PUBLIC meeting will be held in the Rectory Cottages, Church Green Road, Bletchley, Bucks., on Tuesday, 12th March, commencing at 8.30 p.m.

A simple enough statement, but one which could bring hope to physically handicapped children in Milton Keynes. The meeting has been called to discuss the formation of a group working for spastics in the area.

For several years a small group of parents and friends

known as the Milton Keynes Centre for Handicapped Children Support Group have campaigned without a great deal of success for better facilities. The time has arrived when some of the members feel that the formation of a spastics group would present wider appeal to the general public and a larger measure of support. At the same time the group would be affiliated to The Spastics Society and would have its backing in its efforts to look after the welfare of spastics in Milton Keynes.

Front-door campaign for Spastics Week



A picture which illustrates one of the major activities of Spastics Week — the door-knock campaign which, it is hoped, will be the most successful ever. Local groups are now busily enlisting volunteer collectors to knock on doors in thousands of streets up and down the country.

MRS. Mary Wilson, wife of the Prime Minister, will present the prizes to the winners of the Society's literary contest for spastics at a special ceremony during Spastics Week.

The prize-giving at the Society's headquarters in London will be one of the highlights of Spastics Week, which begins on Sunday, April 28.

The theme of the Week is "The Handicapped Adolescent" and a Press conference will be held by the Society to focus attention on the problems of these young people.

A massive amount of energy and activity is going into preparations for Spastics Week throughout the country to ensure that it will be the most successful ever. One big boost in the effort to raise money is the door-knock leaflet which graphically tells groups how many pairs of collectors' feet it needs to send out down the streets knocking on doors to raise money. Organisation is the keynote in filling the by now familiar envelopes with vital cash.

The leaflet lists organisations which can be approached for volunteer collectors and urges groups to try everything and everyone. One group has been very successful by telephoning random numbers and enlisting

help. They have found that at least one out of five agrees to collect.

Meanwhile, details for the Service of Dedication at St. Martin-in-the-Fields, London, are being finalised. Mr. Brian Rix, a dedicated member of the Stars Organisation for Spastics, will give the address and the choir will come from the Society's Thomas Delarue School. Among the groups who will be holding services in their own areas are Winchester and Wolverhampton. A special tea is being laid on at the Society's Family Services and Assessment Centre in Fitzroy Square, London, for everyone who attends the service, many of whom will have travelled long distances.

Warrington, Lancashire, branch of the Market Traders' Federation, has presented £115 to Warrington Spastics Welfare Group.

The money will help the group to provide a holiday home in North Wales.

West Ham Round Table has donated £1,000 to the East London Spastics Society. This will enable the group to have central heating installed at its newly-opened centre.

Your best buys this month

WHAT with St. David's Day and St. Patrick's Day falling in the month. March is a fine time for the Welsh and the Irish. For the rest of us, however, it is when we can at last begin to believe that spring is really on its way.

And for all of us who have to do the shopping there is the cheering prospect of a greater range of home-grown vegetables coming into the markets soon. Already supplies of new-season's cucumbers — and how tasty they are — are building up, lettuces are heartier, salad onions tastier, watercress bigger leaved, which makes salads more interesting. It won't be that long before the first English tomatoes arrive to add even more flavour and colour to the bowl.

Root crops and green vegetables are easily available, although some shopping sense is called for now that 'end-of-the-seasonish' produce is about. When a cheap buy doesn't look as though it will be a good one, in the long run it is better to get something else.

It's not so good a period for home-grown fruit. Cooking apples aplenty, but eating apples almost entirely Cox's Orange Pippins, and once all those left in store are used up, well, there'll be no more until the summer. Pears have pretty nearly disappeared. They did us well, though, staying in prime condition right to the end.

For useful meals during the week or at weekends, poultry is invaluable, be it oven-ready, chilled or fresh-plucked. Fried chicken makes a change from the more usual roast or casserole, and here's a recipe that makes sure there is a lot of flavour to it:—

Cheesy Fried Chicken
4 joints frying chicken, cooked; 1 British egg, beaten; Salt, pepper and dry mustard; 4 tablespoons toasted breadcrumbs, 4 tablespoons Cheddar cheese, grated; fat for frying; 1 tablespoon flour; 4 small strips parsley.

Season the flour highly with salt, pepper and mustard. Turn chicken in this, brush with beaten egg, toss in mixed crumbs and cheese. Shallow fry in fat until brown and cooked through, about 20 minutes. Serve with fried potatoes and crisp green salad.

TWO VITAL DATES

• If you sell to Social Services Departments, you need the Social Services Suppliers Exhibition, Kenilworth, 5-8 November 1974.

• If you sell or manufacture aids, or provide a service for the disabled, you need The National Aids for the Disabled Exhibition, Harrogate, 16-19 October 1974.

These two important exhibitions provide the perfect opportunity to meet, talk with and sell to your buyers. Send today for full details and space available.

Exhibitions and Trade Fairs International Limited, 943a Brighton Road, Purley, Surrey.

To Exhibitions and Trade Fairs International Limited, 943a Brighton Road, Purley, Surrey.

Please send me full details of (tick appropriate boxes) Social Services Suppliers Exhibition ☐ The National Aids for the Disabled Exhibition ☐

Name.....

Company.....

Address.....

Slade is top of the pops at happy 'official' opening

IT was the brightest, zaniest, happiest "official opening" ever when the Slade opened a new special care unit in an East London school. There was no time for long, dry

speeches as Britain's best selling pop stars clowned their way through the proceedings.

The unit, which cost over £61,000, was built by The Spastics Society and is part of the Ick-

burgh Road School in Clapton.

The Society had seen the need for such units, when it was decided to transfer the responsibility of schools for those formerly deemed "in-educable" from the Department of Health and local authorities to the Department of Education. The Ickburgh Road unit was a pilot scheme designed by architects of Foster Associates.

The unit had in fact been in use for 18 months, but the school particularly wanted the Slade, who had raised money towards it with a Stars Organisation for Spastics Concert at Wembley, to perform the opening. The Slade looked in a crowded diary filled with engagements for America, Europe and Japan, and came up with St. Valentine's Day.

Not only is the group tops in chart popularity, but also one of the hardest working groups when it comes to charity fund-raising.

Mr. James Loring, Director of The Spastics Society, officially handed over the unit to the Inner London Education Authority.

He spoke of the value of joint enterprises between voluntary societies and authorities, and added that although the Society had handed over the unit to I.L.E.A., it would continue to take an interest in the unit's future. The fact that not all the children it catered for were spastics was for the good since it would

help them to mix.

Mr. Loring also spoke of the Society's view toward the role of special education in the future. He stressed that the Society was keen for the handicapped to be integrated with the able-bodied, but that the welfare of the individual child must come first. There were many handicapped children in ordinary schools already and if it would not benefit a child to go to one, then an alternative should be found.

Mr. Loring then went on to congratulate the Slade who, he announced, had been awarded the show business accolade of the Carl Allan Award by Princess Margaret the night before. It was the fourth award to the group that week.

Then Noddy Holder declared the unit open. The group also donated a Chairmobile to the unit.

The new building has a large

Continued on Page 9

RIGHT: Riding high, and Dave looks as if he is carrying off one of his young fans, like a knight of old in the fairy stories.



Noddy Holder and a small fan get to know each other.



Mrs. Patricia Matthews, Sheila Rawstorne, Chief Executive, SOS, and David Wigg, the SOS member who brought the Slade to the school, pictured with the group, and (extreme right), James Loring, Director of The Spastics Society. Below: Noddy Holder shares a table with one of the pupils of Ickburgh School.

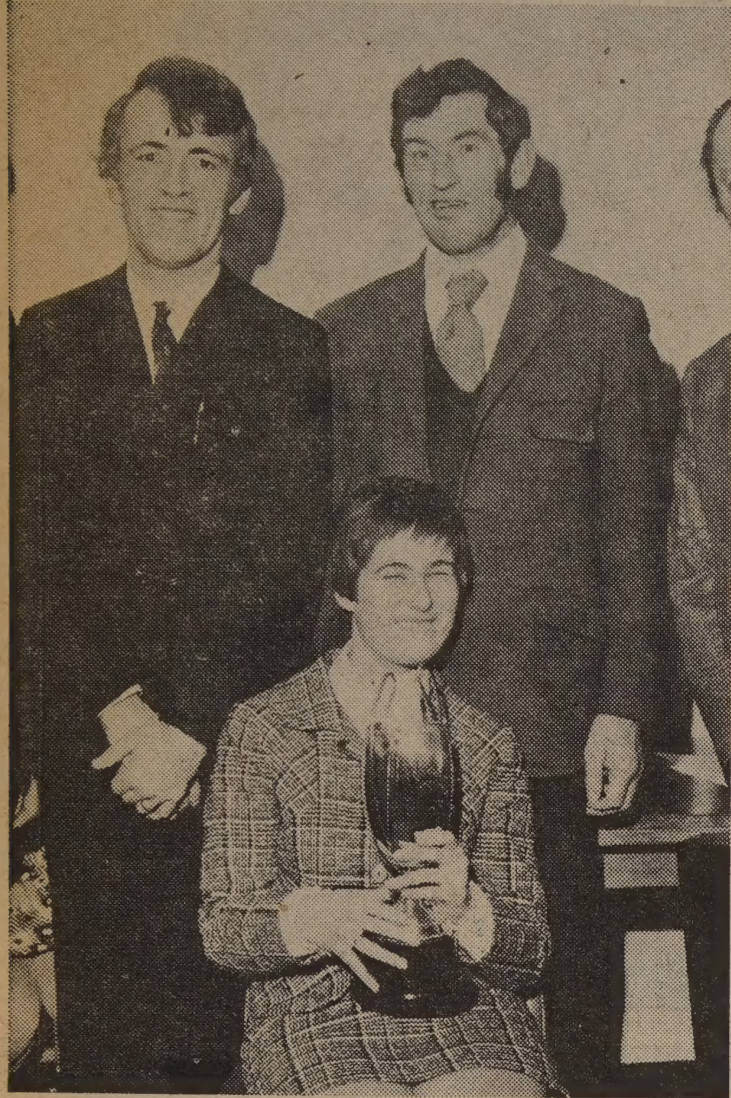


All together now. Jim and Noddy, whose act normally costs a pretty penny, perform for free in the classroom.



The gifts the children had made for the group, including, appropriately enough, a Valentine card, as the opening took place on February 14.

The Society's Achievement Awards



Award winner Linda Berwick proudly holds the trophy with left, Lawrence Walters second prizewinner, and Mr. Kenneth Cooper, who was third.

Linda's inspiring story of courage

Winner of the Achievement Award was 23-year-old Linda Berwick, of Grundy Street, Poplar, E.14. She was nominated by the East London Spastics Society. The citation for Linda read:

LINDA was born spastic with little sight. Unable to stand or walk in early childhood, her method of mobility was to crawl dragging her body around by hands and arms. An operation helped to straighten her legs and restricted walking was achieved with the aid of Tripeds. This put her upright for the first time.

At the age of 12, through constant pain and frustration she had a nervous breakdown, and at the age of 14 she became totally blind. Life as a vegetable seemed inevitable, but Linda faced her new situation with fortitude, courage and determination, rose to the challenge, and in the next few years met and overcame all obstacles.

Activities and achievements from 1964: During a two-year period while learning to ride a pony Linda appeared on a TV appeal programme, "Pony Riding for the Disabled." Soon afterwards she fell from a pony and had to give up the sport. Later, through being on a radio programme, "At Home This Afternoon," she became acquainted with an organisation called the Wingfield Music Trust, became a member, and for three years played a big part in teaching youngsters the flute. Being no mean flautist herself, having passed the Royal Academy of Music Grades 3 and 4 with merit, she played solo parts in various concerts run by Wingfield; after a concert at St. Paul's Cathedral she was presented with her own flute. However, through increasing pain in her eyes, she was advised to discontinue the instrument she loved.

She then channelled her efforts in obtaining employment. After months of endeavour she started with her present employers as a switchboard operator and has been there over three years. Whilst being trained as a telephonist she was presented

First news of the winners of The Spastics Society's Achievement Awards was reported in the last issue of Spastics News, but the stories which led to the nine finalists travelling to London for the Award judging and presentations are such an inspiration that today we are printing the citations which gave the judges such a difficult task in reaching a decision.

The citations printed today are just a handful from the hundreds of stories of courage and determination shown by spastics all over Britain. They were put

forward for the Award by teachers, University professors, social workers, neighbours, colleagues at work, relatives and friends.

Finally, the distinguished panel of judges, Sir Geoffrey Jackson, Lady Macleod, Mr. Jack Ashley, M.P., and Mr. Graham Hill decided that the second annual Achievement Award should go to Linda Berwick, with Lawrence Walters second and Kenneth Cooper third. Linda received £250 and a silver trophy for "the most outstanding effort, or the most meritorious achievement in any field in 1973 by a spastic person in Britain."

"Twice the effort in everything he does"



Graham Hill making the presentation to Christopher Hills.

Christopher Hills, aged 38, of Abbots Road, Abbots Langley, Watford, was nominated by the Hon. Secretary of the Watford and District Spastics Group, Mr. W. H. Welstead. He said in his citation:

CHRIS Hills is not a very heavily handicapped person

who has achieved a spectacular success in some particular direction—he is one of a large band of moderately handicapped people who achieve a great deal by perseverance and courage. We think he has been able to do more than most.

He has much to contend

Continued on Page 8



Linda Berwick with Mr. Anthony Frank the Society's Assistant Director, Regions, at the lunch for finalists.

with a Braille watch by an American company "For the pupil showing the most outstanding achievement in telephony." Linda began this job with an Australian Bank in the city at the age of 20. The management say she is the best operator they have ever had. She has trained five members of the staff to operate the switchboard and also trained a blind man in telephony for another bank.

While listening to "World At One" on the radio, Linda was so impressed by a woman making an appeal on behalf of Exeter Tapes for the Handicapped that she wrote and became acquainted with Mrs. M. Braddick, who runs the organisation. Linda eventually accepted the post of hon. London P.R.O. and arranges interviews with personalities, footballers, actors, commentators, etc., to make tapes for bedridden or housebound people. Mrs. Braddick says of Linda: "We are obviously in contact with many people who bravely face disability, but Linda has turned hers into a tool of brilliant service to the handicapped. I can think of no one more worthy of this Award, though she herself would be the last to think so."

Next, Linda promoted a club for the handicapped, to arrange visits to concerts, places of interest and social evenings. The difficulty was to transport people around. Undaunted, Linda initiated a fund to raise money for a tail-gate ambulance. The target was £2,400, and eventually this was achieved and the club now has its own ambulance, and is in a sound financial position.



Last year's winner of the Achievement Award was Dick Boydell who in spite of very severe disability has become a successful computer programmer. Before the presentation ceremony Dick handed the trophy he has held for a year to Sir Geoffrey Jackson. Pictured centre is Dick's father Mr. Jack Boydell.

Success was won after years of determination

Second prizewinner Lawrence A. Walters, M.Sc., C.Eng., M.I.E.E., of Mayswood Road, Wootton Wawen, Solihull, Warwickshire, was nominated by his wife. She said in her citation:

MY husband is a spastic in his late thirties and his disability affects him in all his movements and speech. He lacks certain control in all limbs and has to wear surgical shoes. He tires very easily and his hands and arms are subject to involuntary movements. His speech is a major obstacle in both social and professional life.

Because of the severity of his disability he was regarded as ineducable, and because of this received no schooling at all for several years. His poor physical condition gave the appearance of someone who would never be able to take an active part in society or even be independent.

When he was 10 he was finally accepted into a local school and later transferred to a modern secondary school, which he left at 14. For the next seven years he had a menial job in a factory and it was suggested to him during this period that Rempoy employment would be the best long term arrangement for him. He had other ideas!

Studying part-time at the local Technical College which involved many practical difficulties apart from writing, which he found very slow and difficult, he obtained his Higher National Certificate by the age of 21, and subsequently got the necessary academic qualifications for the Institute of Electrical Engineers.

Sheer determination resulted in him being accepted by Lancashire Dynamo & Crypto Ltd. for a two-year course of practical and technical training. The course was specially arranged to take account of his physical limitations.

After completing training my

husband joined the design staff of L.D.C., and spent the next four years designing all types of industrial d.c. motors and generators. At this point we met and, after we were married, he was offered a more senior post with another electrical company designing more complex versions of electrical machines. During this time he became a Member of the Institution of Electrical Engineers and a Chartered Engineer.

Seven years ago he joined a research team working on advanced electric vehicles, his main responsibility being the electrical design of high powered density motors. Last December the University of Aston awarded him a M.Sc. degree for his research work on magnetic materials.

He is author of several technical papers and is joint author of a paper to be read in the U.S.A. early in 1974. His speech prevents him going to Detroit to read it himself.

Lady Macleod presents second prizewinner Lawrence Walters with his prize.



David Clemmett receives Graham Hill. All the ru

David has every exa

David Clemmett, aged 21, of Hemel Close, Thornaby, Tees-side, was nominated by the Tees-side Spastics Society. From his citation:

DAVID was educated at Middlesbrough Open Air School, Norton, Tees-side, and at Lingham Technical College, Billingham. He obtained highest number of GCE 'O' 'A' level passes in his year, has a total of 3 CSE exam GCE 'O' levels and 4 GCE 'A' levels. David managed to p

My husband was an active member of the Urmsdon & Lister Group of The Spastics Society during its early years. In any committee he has the ability to analyse a situation and generate enthusiasm. Using foresight to overcome difficult problems is one of his main characteristics. His life is a good example of triumph over adversity.

During the whole of my husband's career he has never found the way ahead easy, indeed sometimes it has been extremely frustrating for him. Actually, in his earlier years, college lecturers and lecturers suggested to him that he was being obstinate and unrealistic in pursuing a technical education, since in their view, degree of his disability would prevent him from becoming a professional engineer!

Our nine-year-old daughter is beginning to realise that she has a very special daddy. She has surmounted very great obstacles and fought with great determination and courage to prove that a spastic can progress in, and be a useful member of, modern society.



receives his prize of Premium Bonds from the runners-up received Premium Bonds.

has passed examination

aged 21, Thornaby, nominated by Society.

ated at Rag-Air School, and at Bil-College. Atained the GCE 'O' and this year. He E exams, 9 4 GCE 'A' ged to pass

every examination for which he entered.

After obtaining employment with Tees-side County Borough Council, David worked in a number of departments during a probationary period of six months. He is now employed on a permanent basis as a trainee in the Treasurer's department. He has just sat for the Institute of Municipal Treasurers and Accountants Intermediate examination for which he has been studying.

He walks with the aid of two sticks and is partially sighted.

More about the Achievement Award finalists on Page 8.



Raymond Dexter with his parents at the lunch.

His parents wept at "glorious news"

Raymond Dexter, aged 17, of Green Lane, Bagshot, Surrey, was nominated by his father, who said in his citation:

RAYMOND is at present studying at Thomas Delarue School, Tonbridge, Kent. Up until the age of five he was unable to walk, talk, or even sit up—he used to hop about like a huge frog. So in the space of 12 short years he has learned to talk and walk unaided.

He lived in a wheelchair for seven years until the age of 12. Then for the next three years he was enclosed in steel calipers whilst he also managed to learn how to talk.

In his leisure time he has

compiled a full biography of the Regimental History of the Royal Engineers; this feat having taken months of hard and frustrating work.

And now the moment of truth, his greatest achievement. After a week at The Spastics Society's Assessment Centre in London, we, his parents, have been told that he is no longer a cabbage. He will not have to go into a centre for the handicapped, he can seek outside employment. This is the greatest thing that can happen to any handicapped person, and has indeed given him the key to open the door to life. When we heard the glorious news we all wept!

The little girl they said would never walk

Twelve-year-old Christine Horth, who attends the Society's Meldreth Manor School, received a special prize from the Director, Mr. James Loring. She was nominated by her parents, Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Horth, of Harwich Road, Mistley, Essex. After describing her present achievements, they said of their little girl:

WE thought you might also like to know something of her earlier struggles to get where she is today.

At the age of one year she was never going to walk, according to the hospital. She had a play pen given to her. Day after day she dragged herself to her feet and stood up, until one day when she was two years old she walked across the room—her legs were turned right in and her feet pointed towards each other. She walked and walked; she kept falling over but did not cry—up she got and started all over again, and her legs slowly got stronger.

She went to her first school at Colchester and she kept falling down—they were surprised she did not cry. She just said 'Kiss it better' and started again. Without her courage



when she was small there would be no achievement today.

When her picture was in our local paper lots of people came up to her grandad and said they had a son or daughter

who was handicapped and it cheered them up to see her. She says she wants to have a jumble sale in our front garden for spastics when she comes home."

Respect and praise for a valued member of the community

Third prizewinner was Kenneth Cooper, aged 51, of Lyndhurst Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk. He was nominated by his colleague, Mr. G. A. Sutton, and here are extracts from his citation:

I WAS told by a colleague at work that one of the library assistants was a spastic; not knowing really what a spastic was, I shelved the problem until one day I had a phone call regarding a book I had ordered from the library. It was Ken Cooper on the line—my moment of truth had arrived. I answered the phone convinced I wouldn't understand a word he had to say—I would just say 'yes' and 'no', then call the chief librarian afterwards to get a "proper" explanation.

Strangely enough, my caller wasn't at all incoherent. I understood all he had to say; what is more, he even helped me over my problem and asked if he could be of further assistance. I was sadly—no, happily—deflated. I hope I have illus-

trated the fact that the most average of people fall into the trap of considering spastics to be "other people."

Not many months later Ken arrived as librarian-in-charge of our library—not large, but a highly sophisticated one of some 3,000 volumes, no small task; we ask a lot of our librarian.

As we got to know Ken his influence slowly filtered into our daily work. He told us about the '62 Club he established in 1971 and how difficult it was for him to get his members along each Wednesday. I don't know how he did it, but he now has a band of 20 drivers, all from our laboratory, on a rota—transport problem now solved. Funds for the club holiday and other necessities were short: strangely, our tea money was increased—money problem solved. Ken works in a most unobtrusive way, as I believe

he has done all his life, slowly persevering with problems to their solution and never, never giving up.

Ken is 51, although one wouldn't believe it, and has overcome his disability in a remarkable fashion. From a child when nothing was done for spastics—other than to put them in a mental asylum—Ken has overcome almost incoherent speech and the inability to even hold a pencil, he has leg irons and very little control of his limbs. The eventual purchase of a second-hand typewriter not only improved his communication problem, but also won him a place in an agricultural college at a time when competition was high from able-bodied people. Shortly after leaving to take up farming, he contracted arthritis and spent many months on his back. Now, with arthritis added to his other disabili-

ties, he joined Remploy but still continued his welfare work after hours.

Marriage and the prospects of a worthwhile career caused Ken to leave Remploy to become a librarian with the Ministry of Agriculture, at the Fisheries Research Laboratory, Lowestoft.

Professionally, Ken has been chairman of the local union and representative on Whitley Council and Sports and Social Committees, attending many functions, organising outings and treasure hunts, also participating in local charity carnivals.

Perhaps, not least of all, Ken has a keen sense of humour and is slowly making his name as an author, particularly on disability subjects. He is a well-liked and respected member of our community and more than worth what little praise I give him here.

Picture above, by courtesy of The Sun, shows Christine—the little girl they said would never walk—enjoying life at Meldreth Manor School. Picture below shows Christine receiving her special prize and certificate from the Director, Mr. James Loring.



Teacher is "an example to all and man of great integrity"

Norman Perry, aged 28, of Parkhead Drive, Weston Coyney, Stoke-on-Trent, was nominated by colleague Mrs. J. L. Scholes of Blythe Bridge, Stoke-on-Trent. Extracts from the citation:

I HAVE known Norman since he was seven, when in spite of his severely crippled legs, feet and hands, he attended Meir Junior School, travelling each day from his home by tricycle. At this time I was a probationer teacher, immediately impressed by this independent child with the cheerful grin who refused any offer of help and who was determined

to be completely self-sufficient in every way.

I moved to another school, but heard from time to time of his career at Longton High School, where he withstood the hurly-burly of life in a large grammar school, expecting no preferential treatment and emerging with sufficient qualifications to enter a teachers' training college.

Our paths crossed when, after teaching for two years at Pinewood School, Meir, the Headmaster happened to mention the names of new teachers for the coming year. The name Norman Perry immediately registered and I told the Head something of his history. Naturally he was a little appre-

hensive at the thought of having a spastic teacher in a large school of some 500 children. He need have had no fear. Norman soon won the hearts of staff and children alike, and quickly established himself as a thoroughly competent and very conscientious teacher.

He has now been at Pinewood for six years. Norman is one of the most reliable colleagues and friends... his word is his bond and he never forgets anything he has been asked to do. In spite of his grave disability and seemingly frail physique, he has not been absent from his post more than once since 1967 and is an example to all and a man of great integrity.



Norman Perry (centre) with Jack Ashley, M.P., and Graham Hill.

Community blueprint for next century?

A SMALL North Midlands town in an area designated semi-depressed by the Government has come up with a pattern of community life that could be a blue-print for the 21st century.

The town is Sutton-in-Ashfield, Nottinghamshire, which in the past has been described as a "hub without a wheel" because there was little community life. Times have changed, for the town centre is being re-developed to integrate every aspect of life.

It is being done with the building of what is known simply as the Sutton Centre, and it will contain everything. The Centre will house a school, restaurant, ice rink, bowls ground, creche, probation offices, youth centre, theatre, sports hall—and a day centre for the aged and handicapped people, when it is completed next year.

The Centre is intended to be used every day of the week, all the year round and, to meet the needs of the shift workers, will be open 14 hours a day.

The school, which is already built, will have its technical studies area alongside the Centre for the handicapped, and pupils will be encouraged to get to know each other over cups of coffee.

This experiment in returning to a tribal way of life with its emphasis on total integration of every age and type of person, will cost the two contributing authorities, the local urban council and county education authority, well over £1 million.



He strives to help outsiders

Bernard Brett, aged 37, of Creffield Road, Colchester, Essex, was nominated by fellow spastic Terence Doo, of Drummonds Centre, Feering, Essex. His brief citation read:

ALTHOUGH he is nearly totally disabled (even swallowing is difficult for him), Mr. Brett organises, with the help of his friends, a lot of social work, is a founder of the Disablement Income Group, and is associated with a project to help the homeless. He is an M.B.E.

That citation was enough to make Bernard Brett a finalist in the contest, a worthy honour for a remarkable man who, in spite of being confined to a

wheelchair and unable to speak, was awarded the M.B.E. for his work with charities ranging from the Colchester Adventure Playground to International Voluntary Service. He is particularly interested in the cause of the homeless, because, as he told a journalist, "I feel we share a common link in being outsiders." In spite of his severe handicaps he aims to live life to the full, and says: "I find that many disabled, lonely and depressed people do get some support from my experiences. I have known much pain and suffering, so if I can encourage people to accept things as they are and make what they can of life, so much the better."

Old friends meet once again and happily get on with the job of catching up on each other's news with the aid of their word-boards.

John Williams, left, and Bernard Brett once shared a room together at the Society's Oakwood Further Education Centre, and they met again when they attended the finals of the Society's Achievement Award. Both were runners-up for the Award.

Pictured below is the scene at the Society's Family Services and Assessment Centre, Fitzroy Square, London, where the finalists had lunch before the prize-giving.



ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS Cont. from page 7.

A brilliant mind and will to succeed

John Williams, aged 32, of Lancaster House, University of Sussex, whose home is in Hoylake, Cheshire, was nominated by Mrs. Liz Cook of Spastics News. Her citation:

JOHN'S indomitable spirit and will to succeed, coupled with his remarkable personality, makes his entry a must, I think. I know that in the broader horizons of life intellect is not necessarily all, but John's brilliant mind is a beacon in a world of hazy understanding of the meaning of spasticity, showing proof that being 'spastic' is not the same as being 'mental'.

John cannot speak, feed him-

self, or move from his wheelchair without help; despite the fact that he sits exams with a pointer strapped to his forehead like a unicorn, indicating his answers on a letter board, he has achieved his B.A. and M.A. Now he is working for his Master of Philosophy degree.

He began his formal education when he was 20 and took 'A' levels in history, economics and the British Constitution at The Spastics Society's further education centre at Kelvedon in Essex and went on to Reading University in 1969. He is now at the University of Sussex.

job in this capacity, but he keeps trying.

As a fund-raiser for our Group he has no equal. He is most persistent and will never give in. As a member of the Appeals Committee he is involved in all money-raising events; he persuaded sponsors to back him for an annual walk and this year achieved nearly £300—and to walk 20 miles is for Christopher like climbing Mount Everest for the normal person; it leaves him physically and mentally exhausted. We put Chris Hills forward for consideration as a wonderful chap with very great courage and determination who, in his limited sphere, has achieved very considerable success.

CHRISTOPHER HILLS (Continued from Page 6)

with. He suffers from poor leg and clumsy arm and hand movements. He is deaf and requires an aid. He has poor sight and must wear strong glasses. His speech is a credit to much training and effort. In fact, everything he does needs twice the effort required from the normal person.

His whole life has been a struggle to achieve something worthwhile against odds. He has gone a long way with little encouragement. He has had the courage to travel to Spain and Canada, although it cannot be easy for him to meet strangers. His efforts to become a book-keeper have not resulted in a

Incontinence with confidence



INCO PRODUCTS give all incontinent patients both young and old the confidence required to lead as normal a life as possible.

INCO GARMENTS — this washable garment is suitable for all ages of both sexes, being available in seven sizes (24" — 58" hips) Two new larger sizes are now available. New waist tapes have been added for greater comfort and convenience when changing the liner. Inco Garments are available from chemists and free from most Local Health Authorities.

INCO ROLL — an absorbent disposable liner in roll form which can be cut to any required length.

INCO UNDERPADS highly absorbent protective pads with a new soft facing. Available in two sizes 16½" x 24" and 30" x 24" through most local Authorities. The 16½" x 24" underpad can also be bought from chemists in packets of ten.

Robinsons OF CHESTERFIELD



NOW 2 LARGER SIZES WITH WAIST TAPES

A challenge for Spastics Week and after

PUBLICITY and fund-raising! These two things occupy much of our thoughts and energy at Society Headquarters. New ideas—some successful; others not so good. Old, well tried and profitable schemes dropped or pushed out in new guises. This is the pattern of a continuous effort, for publicity and fund-raising are essential tools in the efforts to provide increasing services to spastics. On a local level, voluntary groups grapple with the same problems. Enthusiasm and hard work put the seal of success on cherished hopes and the fulfilment of dreams which, at their inception, seemed almost unattainable.

In the Homework Section we, too, have our dreams and visions. We look to, and work for, the day when we are in a position to give work to every homebound spastic who has no opportunity of any other employment. So we, too, are concerned with publicity. We usually have a full diary of exhibitions, tours round the regions visiting groups, speaking engagements and giving support, where possible, to local efforts. In the process we are more and more grateful for the co-operation and friendship of very many group officers.

The Homework Section is also concerned with fund rais-

ing. The section has to pay its way and be able to finance future developments. "If you don't sell, you don't eat" is a simple maxim—but it works! The homeworkers employed by the section are not given charity. They earn their wages and do a first rate job in the process. They know, and we know, that nothing but the best is good enough. We live and work in a competitive market — the Homework Section raises money by offering goods of merit and selling them with vigour and enthusiasm.

Where do you fit into the Homework Section activities? Are you co-partners with us in this particular service to spastics? Regions and headquarters are getting into stride for Spastics Week, hoping for maximum publicity and fund-raising. By selling costume jewellery and handicrafts produced by homebound spastics you help to achieve both objectives. You provide work and you get commission on sales—fund-raising exclusively for your own group.

Of course, it means effort and enthusiasm, of which there is no lack in the regions, but the prizes are there. It only needs one person in a group to see this as their own particular job; the results will surprise you. Remember, we are not only concerned with Spastics Week, the activities of the

Homework Section go on all the year round. Publicity and fund-raising are our daily occupation, for no matter how sympathetic we are, how good our intentions or strong our resolution, if we do not sell and continue to sell, we just cannot employ. It is as simple as that!

1974 will present special challenges to us all. In a year in which the economic climate is likely to be very chilly indeed, the Homework Section will continue to concentrate on the problem of reducing the long list of those spastics, stuck at home, waiting for work. How successful we are will depend in a large measure on the selling efforts of the regions. We are grateful to the groups who have been valiant in their support. You will probably never know, fully, the satisfaction and sense of purpose you give to spastics engaged on the Homework scheme.

This is a call for action! It can be an exciting year if we match the will to the needs. However you are involved and whatever you do to help spastics, may success crown your efforts.

Arthur A. Dobson
Homework Manager

Director calls for change of "heartless" ruling

A story in the *Daily Telegraph* about the plight of two severely handicapped people who had died before they had received "Possum" electronic typewriter equipment which would have allowed them to communicate in the last months of their lives, brought a swift reaction from Mr. James Loring, Director of The Spastics Society. Relatives of the two people who died have called for the overhaul of the administrative procedures which can delay the provision of the equipment. Mr. Loring's letter of support, published in the *Telegraph* on February 19th, read:

I WOULD like to congratulate the *Daily Telegraph* for drawing attention to the harsh rules laid down by the Department of Health concerning the supply of Possum typewriters to the severely disabled.

Mr. David Loshak's report dealt only with terminal cases; and obviously the ruling here is in urgent need of change, since to deny communication to people in their last few months of life is abhorrent to any civilised society. It cannot be defended on any grounds whatsoever.

However, may I point out that the "no speech" rule is nonsensical and heartless anyway as it maroons many other disabled people by cutting them off from social contact. As just one example, a handicapped man or woman living in a residential centre who is unable to write or use an ordinary typewriter can be denied all normal communication with family and friends in the outside world. There have even been cases of those unable to speak or write, but who have been refused a typewriter because they were able to point to letters on a word board.

The Secretary of State for Health and Social Services must order a swift revision of the rules relating to the supply of this vital equipment. The "no speech" rule should be abolished and instead the only criterion for prescription should be that the Possum typewriter enables a severely disabled person to live a fuller life and broaden his contacts with the community.

Slade opening

Continued from Page 5

classroom and play area which can be divided by sliding doors into three. There is also a medical suite and the unit has been decorated with bright bold colours, pink, orange and yellow.

The unit takes 24 multiply handicapped children and there is specialist help regularly available such as physiotherapy. In addition to the regular staff, there is a teacher of the blind and deaf coming in part-time, and an educational psychologist, psychiatrist, speech therapist and second doctor will advise when necessary.

The Slade spent over an hour playing with the children before being whisked away to the studios. S.O.S. member, David Wigg, who had brought them, said: "They love doing this sort of thing to help the children. They've got all the time in the world for them."

The man who raised £163,000 so handicapped can ride



Keith Webb with his partner in the fight against crime.

'You can't look down on someone riding a horse'

FEW people driving past Tooting Police Station in the busy South-Western suburbs of London would guess that this imposing Art Deco building housed a stable block. Four splendid horses live here, in spotless tiled quarters, their walls hung with polished leather harness. Even in these days of motor cycle patrols and radio-directed Panda cars, police horses are not kept merely for ceremonial occasions, but still have an important part to play in the fight against crime.

They are perhaps seen most frequently at political demos. and around the exits to football grounds, where the height of the horse enables its rider to look over the heads of the crowd for potential trouble spots.

Horses are also used to patrol open spaces where the ground is too uneven for cars or motor cycles. Those from the Tooting station are taken out almost every day to patrol the large areas of common land which cover this part of London, and the sight of one of these enormous creatures would surely be enough to deter any potential criminals.

Own horse

Each mounted policeman is responsible for looking after his own horse all the time—grooming, feeding and harnessing—so that gradually, as Mounted Police Constable Keith Webb told me: "The horse becomes an extension of you and you become an extension of the horse."

For P.C. Webb the involvement with horses does not end when he goes off duty, as he is the founder-Chairman of the Diamond Riding Centre for the

Handicapped at Carshalton in Surrey.

Although riding plays such an important part in this man's life, he did not learn to ride himself until he was 24. When he first joined the Police Force he was based at West End Central Station for four years, doing the general work of an ordinary "copper."

During this time he met his wife, June, who had ridden since the age of six. She taught him to ride and he found the hobby an ideal relaxation from the exciting but arduous life of a West End Police Constable.

Later, he applied to go on a six-month training course for the Mounted Branch of the Police. He was selected out of 60 applicants for six places, and found the course very hard work. "For a start, the horses were about twice as big as anything I'd been used to," he said.

After five months of the course he began to feel he would not make the grade, and decided he would have to give up the idea of becoming a mounted policeman. Once this decision had been made he suddenly relaxed and became at one with the horse, able to complete the training after all. He finds that the experience of horses and people gained in the Police has been invaluable in his riding for the disabled work and vice-versa.

Keith and June Webb first saw the potential value of riding for the handicapped 15 years ago when they were in Hampshire visiting friends

who were teaching a handicapped child to ride. But they did not become seriously involved in the work until they moved to South London and discovered that there were no Riding for the Disabled groups in the district at all, although as an urban area it had a high concentration of handicapped children.

The Webbs decided to set up their own riding group, operating at first in a small way on a farm at Oxted with borrowed ponies and equipment. Then, as the number of pupils grew, they realised that if the scheme was worth operating at all it would have to be done on a much larger scale.

Within the space of five years Keith Webb had raised the amazing total of £163,000 for a purpose-built riding centre.

"If we'd had to take six years over it, the centre would never have been built at all," he said. Escalating property prices and building costs added £50,000 to the value of the centre in one year.

P.C. Webb went about the fund-raising in a thoroughly businesslike manner, examining the methods of various other charities in order to learn by their mistakes. Incidentally, The Spastics Society came well out of the scrutiny, "And I'm not just saying that because you work for them," he told me.

From the start he drew up balance sheets and annual reports. "If we wanted to get the businessmen interested, we had to talk in a language they would understand," he said. "Integrity has to be seen as well as implied."

No sentiment

He felt it was particularly important to be realistic, as there is usually too much sentimentality attached to animal and child charities.

The bulk of the money came from trusts and from the Department of Education and Science. Much was also raised locally by such traditional methods as raffles, sponsored rides and horse shows. Many handicapped children took part in the latter, proving that on horseback they could hold their own with the able-bodied and thus providing good publicity for the scheme.

Keith Webb stresses that he could not have given up so much time to the venture if he and his wife had not been involved together. They have deliberately tried not to push their two sons (now aged 11

and 13) into sharing the same interest, but both have taken it up of their own accord.

Finally, this year the Diamond Riding Centre for the Handicapped became operational, having undergone a change of title in the process. It had been called the Diamond Riding Centre for Handicapped Children, but the Webbs felt that they could not turn pupils away when they reached the age of 16, and so the work has been extended to adults.

The centre is situated conveniently near to Queen Mary's Hospital, Carshalton, from where many of the 200 pupils are drawn. The main riding area is under cover and heated, so that lessons can go on in all weathers. To minimise the danger of falls, the floor is composed of three inches of sand over nine inches of wood shavings.

The Diamond Centre owns 10 ponies at present and spends a great deal of money on providing just the right equipment. Most handicapped children need extra deep saddles which can be very expensive.

At first all the helpers were volunteers, but now the Centre employs a few paid staff for the sake of continuity. Pupils are started off with three helpers. Gradually these are decreased to two, then one, and finally they are allowed to ride alone. Some riders can be rather touchy about this.

"They think they are being held back because of their handicap," said P.C. Webb, "but really they are just being treated like any beginner who has to establish a working relationship between himself and the pony."

He added that when one has been working with the disabled for so long, it is easy to forget one's own first reactions, but in briefing new helpers it is important to bear in mind this universal fear of the unknown.

Enjoyment

One of the first handicapped people he taught to ride as a kind of "guinea pig" was a little spastic girl aged six.

"I think she taught me more than I taught her," he said.

He emphasises that the primary object of the scheme is enjoyment, and refuses to enter into any controversy about the physical benefits of riding as a therapy. He seems to have a horror of his venture being regarded as some kind of quack remedy.

"If we don't build up anybody's hopes, then nobody can be disappointed," he said firmly.

However, he is prepared to admit that riding can bring psychological benefits. When a disabled person is out riding, attention is focused on the pony rather than the disability, and the rider becomes a person in his own right. And—literally—he can no longer be looked down upon.

Another factor which Keith Webb pointed out is the question of acceptance by brothers and sisters. Many able-bodied children are ashamed of having a handicapped child in the family, especially in the case of mental handicap, but if they can say to their friends "My brother (or sister) goes riding!" it gives them a sense of one-upmanship.

Riding, after all, is nowadays something of an elitist occupation, and thanks to Keith Webb a large number of handicapped people have been able to join the privileged classes.

Anne Plummer

Death of Mr. Cyril Stapleton

THE Stars Organisation for Spastics has lost one of its founder-members with the death on February 25 of Mr. Cyril Stapleton at the age of 60.

Mr. Stapleton was known to the public as the B.B.C.'s "Mr. Music" when he conducted the Show Band. He started playing the piano at the age of seven, made his first broadcast as a solo violinist at the age of 12, and led his own band by the time he was 20. During the last war he played in the R.A.F. Symphony Orchestra at Potsdam for Sir Winston Churchill, President Truman and Stalin.

Hard worker

He was also an indefatigable worker for the S.O.S. since its inception over 21 years ago, and was one of the original team behind the annual pop concerts which have always been big money raisers. He was already working on this year's concert when he died.

Mr. Stapleton took a very great interest in the two S.O.S. ventures, the holiday centre for children at Bexhill, Colwall Court, and the residential centre, Wakes Hall, and attended management committee meetings whenever possible. He had been planning to play at the S.O.S. Charity Ball this month at the Royal Garden Hotel, London, for which he was giving his services.

New ideas

Mrs. Sheila Rawstone, Chief Executive of S.O.S., said: "I have known Cyril Stapleton since the first meeting of S.O.S. He was always one of the most stalwart members and could always be relied on to help, both by supporting regular activities and thinking up new ideas for the expansion of the organisation. His death has been a very great shock to all the members, and the respect and affection in which he was held has been shown by the non-stop enquiries to the S.O.S. office."

"His cheerful personality and unselfish support will be greatly missed by everybody."

Mr. Stapleton, who died in his sleep, left a widow, Sheila, twin sons and a daughter.

Dartmoor prisoners have put to good use their time "inside" by making toys for spastic children at the Trengweath Centre, Plymouth.

The toys, a dolls' house complete with miniature furniture and a rocking horse, were handed over to the centre by the Assistant Governor and one of the senior officers.

The beautifully detailed workmanship of these items was praised by Miss Margaret Ridley, headmistress of the Trengweath Centre.

FOR SALE

Polio victim's chairmobile for sale. Two years old and virtually unused, in excellent condition. £75. Contact Mrs. S. Bishop, 35 Rostrevor Gardes, Southall, Middlesex. Tel. 01-571 1448.

FOR SALE

Second-hand Everest and Jennings Powerdrive Chair for sale. Good condition, new batteries, etc. £100 o.n.o. Apply: Thody, Akers Lodge, Penn Way, Chorleywood, Herts. Tel. Chorleywood: 2351.

Day or Night Attendance Allowance

Anyone who is severely disabled can claim now.

Anyone who is so severely disabled—either physically or mentally—that they need a lot of help from another person by day or at night, can now claim an Attendance Allowance of £4.15 a week tax-free. But if the help is needed day and night the allowance is £6.20 a week tax-free.

You can claim the day or night allowance now even if a previous claim for the higher day and night allowance failed. But neither allowance can be paid for children under two or people who are NHS hospital in-patients or residents of local authority homes.

If you think you might be entitled to an Attendance Allowance, complete and post the coupon below or ask your local Social Security office for leaflet NI.205.

Please send me Attendance Allowance leaflet NI.205 together with a claim form.

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Address _____

_____ Post code _____

Disabled person's year of birth _____

Please post this coupon to your local Social Security office. You can get the address or a free stamped addressed envelope at your Post Office.

Attendance Allowance.

The North London Spastics Association had a good idea for its annual New Year's party — members did not hold it on New Year's Eve when so many are going on, but saved it for later.

When the party was finally held, they were able to boast four Mayors, one deputy Mayor, and two Carnival queens with their princesses among the guests. Tenants of the Habinteg Housing Estate, which is sponsored by The Spastics Society, were also able to be there.

The picture shows Mrs. M. Taylor, Chairman of the Association, extreme left, with the Habinteg guests, including Mr. Ralph Ince, a committee member, centre, seated, with his wife, Margaret, standing behind him. A Royal touch is added by the Hornsey Carnival queen and princesses on the right.

Picture by courtesy of North London News Ltd.



Dene Park has active helpers

THE Friends of Dene Park Organisation was formed in December 1970, when a group of parents, friends, ex-students and local residents met together at the invitation of the Principal to form a society to promote the welfare of students during their six month stay at the Centre. Many people were already helping in a variety of ways and it was felt that by joining together they might provide funds for amenities not otherwise catered for.

Two major fund-raising activities are promoted each year; a fete in the Spring and a draw at Christmas time. This year the fete will be held in the grounds of Dene Park, Tonbridge, on June 1st. The draw at Christmas 1973 raised over £100, and the prizes were distributed as follows: 1st, Mrs. J. Catchpole, 9 Stourdale Close, Lawford Essex; 2nd, Johnson, 31 Jeleton House, Roman Road, Bethnal Green, London, E2; 3rd, Mr. K. Craven, 12 Back Lane, Tarporley, Cheshire.

The Friends dedicated their early efforts to raising funds to provide a Work Experience and Assessment Unit at the Centre. The Unit is now fully operational. The students are able to gain valuable experience towards assessment, and also carry out sub-contract work, and make available for sale locally their production items. This venture is again financed by the Friends.

Over half the capital cost of the unit has already been met by the Friends and it is their fervent hope that they will be able to complete the payments in the next two years.

Good deed in the fish shop

Mr. and Mrs. E. Lord, owners of a fish and chip shop at Accrington in Lancashire, fed up with hearing grumbles about the younger generation, asked an Accrington newspaper to publicise the good deed of five teenagers who were in their shop recently.

The youngsters, Kim Bentley, Ian Bridge, Jeannie McKie, Lynn Shackleton and Trevor Graham, emptied their pockets and purses on to the counter and put all their loose change into a spastics' collecting box. It amounted to £2.76.

The cruel handicap of loneliness

THERE is a condition known to man as crippling as polio, as alienating as mental disorder, and as agonising for its victims as the sharpest physical pain known to nature. Yet its cure is simple, costs nothing in terms of money, requires no elaborate research, and yet is almost beyond the reach of sufferers. It is loneliness.

Jeremy Seabrook takes the word as the starting-off point for his book published recently, with stark and moving pictures by award-winning photographer Bryn Campbell.

His researches took him all over the country, into poor homes and rich ones, among the old and the young, the gifted and the untalented.

And in one form or another he was told the same story of the tragedy of people who felt totally alone, trapped either by their own inadequacy or the inadequacies of society generally.

No sentiment

Mr. Seabrook's presentation of their stories is straightforward and lacking in sentimentality. He described each subject as far as their background, history, and present circumstances go, and then lets them take over and tell their tale in their own words.

Interestingly he almost never used either tape recorder or notebook, as he found that inhibited people. Instead, he relied on his memory.

The touches that he does add are poignant in their very matter-of-factness, like the 90-year-old widower who had lost his wife the year before. The old man was thumbing through a cookery book of the 1920's to discover how to cook a frozen chicken joint for his Christmas lunch the following day. Another old person, a woman, dourly remarked that men went to work in the dark and came home in the dark when she was a child and it was still the same today.

Many of the older folk felt that life had been a lot easier

in the old days of cheap, good food and good friends.

They had out-lived many people they had known and loved, and rarely saw their children. So they either saw elderly people in the same state as themselves or, if they were housebound, saw no-one at all.

More intense was the loneliness of the young, the drifters who had never fitted in anywhere, and now felt that they would never find a place to "belong."

Lost hopes

Some of the most evocative and reasoned descriptions of their state came from the middle-aged. Those who had lost the hope of things improving that the young have, without having reached the state of resignation of the very old.

One brave spinster lady looked back on a life tied to her mother, and was able to feel no bitterness. "She kept me because she didn't want to be alone in her old age, and she wasn't, but I shall have no one."

Another tragic widower had lost his wife and young twin sons in a road crash which he had survived. Now weighted down with iron-mongery inside to keep him going, he ran a home of shelter for men as a "house-father."

Many of the people had suffered illness, either mental or physical, in later life which had directly or indirectly intensified their problem. One of his subjects, however, was a bright, warm, friendly and highly intelligent girl with lots of personality. Only nobody ever came to find out—because she is a spastic.

Moving

Of the 33 people whose sad tales are told so movingly, her's is the longest and one of the most articulate.

Named as Delia, she is 30 with virtually no use of arms and legs, and very indistinct speech. However, she has a Possum Unit which gives her a fair bit of independence with its electronic ability to do the things she can't. Her best method of communication is with the typewriter which she uses with her nose.

She gets about under her own steam, although this is rare, by travelling on trains and handing notes to porters, taxi-drivers or policemen, which begin: "I am afraid I have no speech, but I assure you I'm not a moron or a nut-case, but I want to get to Camden."

She then has to watch while they panic and fetch help when all she really needed was a friendly helping hand. In many ways, for she is intelligent, she is forced to regret her brain and wish she was the unfeeling, unthinking creature people take her for.

She is married to an able-bodied man, and this is when she first felt utterly lonely and isolated. For they moved to a council estate and she was on her own. Before, at boarding school and college, there had always been someone to chat to. Now she knew no one in the new town, and nobody wanted to know her.

She said: "I think the answer is mainly FEAR. Fear, not only of my physical disability and communication problems, but also fear of becoming involved. Nasty. Who knows what I might ask them to do? . . . I daren't ask people to stop by sometimes because of this. Of course, it would be super if people called in to make a cup of coffee, but more than coffee I need company, conversation, stimulation, PEOPLE."

Afraid

Delia also finds that people are afraid that she is violent and going to leap out of her wheelchair and assault them. Because of her speech, half the neighbourhood think she must be deaf, dumb and daft, while the other half, hearing of all her GCEs, think she's too high-brow to talk to.

"A great joke is that when people pass my window they invariably look in and wave. Big deal. Let's give her a wave, they must think, and make her day. A nice gesture, granted, but God, gestures are gestures."

Her marriage has proved unhappy, which has drained a lot of the strength she had. She found that she was just as alone when he came home as when she was stuck by herself all day. In the end she decided on suicide. "It was not meant to be a gesture, I could see no other practical way out of my predicament. I am not what is termed a neurotic character. It certainly wasn't a gesture when I think what a struggle it was—it took me an hour and a half to open the damn bottle. So time ran out. I was found too soon. I went to hospital, where I saw a psychiatrist, who said the solution to my matri-

Colwall Court opens new door to integration

THE Housparent staff at Colwall Court, the Stars Organisation for Spastics holiday home at Bexhill, Sussex, came up with an idea for re-designing and decorating the play room. It was so successful that since there was such a good play room the next idea was that should be filled with a play group.

This month it started, but it is a very special play group. Mr. Cyril Ives, Colwall Court's manager, explained: "In line with the Society's policy of integrating the handicapped in the community, we are opening it to both han-

dicapped and able-bodied children in the area. It will give them social experience at an early age—it will give them a chance to develop both emotionally and intellectually with experimental play."

The play group will also have an added benefit. "There will be parental support for local families. They will have the opportunity of discussions with professional caring people."

The play group will take 12 children at a time at its twice daily sessions and the cost will be 40p for one session or £1 a day with lunch included. In charge will be Avril Williams, a fully qualified nursery nurse who has been a housemother at Colwall Court for a year.

Meetings

A discussion evening is planned so that parents can get together with doctors and social workers.

The children will be aged between two-and-a-half and five and the play group will also be open, free of charge, to children staying at Colwall Court on holiday.

Mr. Ives said: "The holiday side is now under the supervision of a fully qualified matron, Jean Moore, and there will be extensive play activities. We thought that now the holiday side is so well organised and more holiday centres are opening up, it would be a good idea to develop the day care side."

Generous gift from newspaper

Leicester and District Spastics Society has been presented with a mini bus by a local newspaper. This is one of many gifts to charity being made by the Leicester Mercury to mark its centenary this year, in recognition of the support given to the paper over the years by the people of the city and county of Leicester.

Liz Cook

"Lonelines," by Jeremy Seabrook, with picture sequences by Bryn Campbell, is published by Temple Smith in conjunction with New Society, and costs £1.25.

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How Press helped spastic in battle with bureaucracy

THE story of Mr. Bert Whiting, pictured below, shows that the press can be a powerful ally in the fight against bureaucracy.

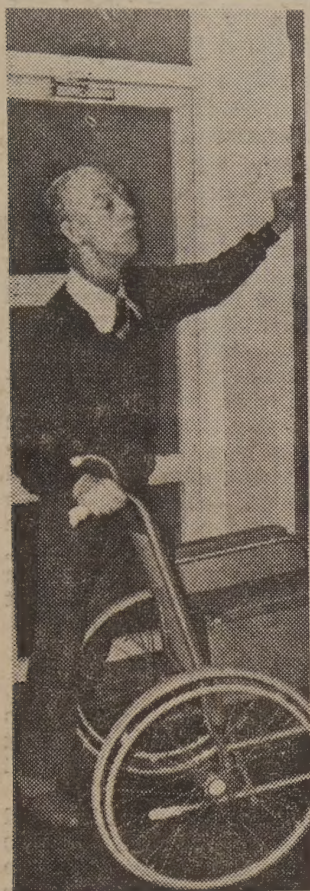
Mr. Whiting, a 65-year-old spastic from Barnet, has managed to cope well with his disability all through his life, and ran his own business for 34 years.

His troubles started when his mother died two years ago and he was unable to go out alone because his flat was on the second floor and he could not get in and out of the lift in his wheelchair. He applied for a single-bedroomed ground floor flat in a block being built by Barnet Council. His doctor and vicar supported the application, but nobody from the housing department came to investigate his case.

His sister, Mrs. Lily Bates, who visits him every day to do his housework and help him feed and dress, made repeated telephone calls to the council without avail. On one occasion she claims to have heard an official say in the background, "Tell her anything to get rid of her!"

Finally, Mrs. Bates telephoned the *Edgware, Mill Hill and Kingsbury Times*, who sent a reporter to interview Mr. Whiting. Once the Council knew that the local press was involved the red tape was cut immediately and Mr. Whiting was able to move into his new ground floor flat within weeks.

Picture by courtesy of *Edgware, Mill Hill and Kingsbury Times*



Hush—they are a secret...

The Spastics Society has had a "Secret Six" working for it—and they were so "secret" that for a time even the Society did not know that they had a band of secret helpers.

For the "Secret Six" from Basildon, Essex, Wendy Harris and Lisa Randall, aged 11, and Gillian Groom, Julie Styles, Carol Murray and Susan Brown, aged 10, joined together and collected toys, puzzles and books, and held a mini jumble sale. They raised £1 which they sent to the Society and, spurred on by the letter of thanks they received, set their targets even higher. A raffle brought in £6.

However, the "Secret Six" is not quite so secret any more, for the girls now all wear "Help spastics" badges sent to them by the Society.

Film wins another trophy

THE film 'Like Other People,' financed largely by The Spastics Society, which, as reported in last month's Spastics News, has already won four international trophies, has now been granted a silver award in the 1973 British Medical Association Film competition.

The film was also voted the Best Sponsored Film of 1973 by the British Federation of Film Societies, and as a result will compete in the Film Society Short Film Award to be decided in April at the National Film Theatre.

Why Mary watches for the postman



John Barsby, art teacher at the Princess Marina Centre, and Mary take a last look at "Girl and a butterfly" before it was presented to President Heinemann.

A drastic sacrifice



A taste of things to come? Ken Possnicker publican of the Plume of Feathers "clips" one of his regulars Peter Rice. One of the pair will be turned into a baldylocks in a bid to help a spastic.

Picture by courtesy of the South East London Mercury.

... but Freddie will get his wheelchair

FREDDIE Williams is a 21-year-old spastic who desperately needs an electric wheelchair to prevent him from becoming a shut-in. Regulars in Greenwich pubs are determined that he is going to get it, too. But the cost is going to be £300, and a Yul Brynner haircut for someone!

Ken Possnicker, publican, of The Plume of Feathers, started a campaign in which surrounding pubs joined, to raise money for Freddie's chair when they heard that Freddie's go-kart was no longer suitable for him. Jumble sales and raffles have been among the money-raising schemes. In fact, Ken

has ordered the chair for March 3, and if there is not enough money in the kitty he will subsidise it out of his own pocket until there is enough, and have his hair shaved off into the bargain. Matching that sacrifice is Peter Rice, one of Ken's regulars, for if the target is reached in time

he has offered his pate for shaving to help the sponsored cause.

Said Peter, a builder: "I am prepared to have my hair off for Freddie, as I don't want to see any youngster shut away. I have four sons who are all healthy, and I feel very lucky."

Freddie needs an electric wheelchair because the disabled uncle with whom he lives is not strong enough to push him in an ordinary wheelchair, and a hospital specialist has ruled out his having an electric invalid car because of the nature of his handicap.

Billiards and snooker champions Joyce Gardner and Jack Rae held an exhibition and auction evening at Bushey Conservative Club, Hertfordshire, which raised over £140 for The Spastics Society.

Vera's romance

Cont. from Page 1

December outside the Assembly Hall in Stoke Newington, and went in to hear the concert. Said Vera: "I thought about it a lot and decided to write to Mr. Webb." They continued to meet and Vera took him to meet her Aunt Mary.

"We spent a lot of time talking and getting to know each other," Pat recalled. And then on Boxing Day at Bognor he proposed.

"I told him I'd think about it," laughed Vera.

"And I was on tenterhooks," Pat remembered. "I was in such a state Vera got quite worried about me." He took her to meet his mother, aged 86, who lives in a Hove old people's home.

They are getting married on April 20 at the Church of St. Ignatius in Stoke Newington. After the reception Mr. Carr will drive them down to Pat's home in Portslade, near Brighton.

"I know we'll have lots of problems to face — there will be one after the other unless we win the pools," said Pat.

"But we will be together to face them," said Vera happily.

One problem Vera and Pat have to face is the move to Pat's Sussex home. For Vera has built up a wide circle of friends in North London and she will be cut off from them by the move. They are hoping it may be possible to find somewhere in North London to live.

Vera took Pat along to meet Mr. Carr at the agency that was the starting point of their romance. "I never dreamt I was going to fall in love when I first came here, I just came for a job," said Vera. "But let's hope this is more permanent," Pat added with a smile.

And Mr. Carr is definitely not going into the marriage bureaux field. "I've never passed on a letter before, and I only did it this time because I was guided by instinct. I'll stick with the staff agency and be proud of my one success as Cupid."

TWENTY-SEVEN-year-old Mary Older has a special interest in the post that arrives at the Princess Marina Centre, Seers Green, Bucks., each morning.

For Mary, who has lived at the centre for the last 11 years, has a very special package to look forward to. It is President of the Federal a signed photograph from the German Republic.

They have never met, but the President was presented with a painting of Mary's during an exchange visit organised by the Central Bureau of International Visits and Exchanges of the Disabled.

Reception

Before the visit the Bureau thought it would be a good idea if one of the group going to Germany could present some token to the German President at a reception for them that he was attending.

A painting of Mary's, entitled "Girl and a Butterfly," was chosen. It was presented by Linda Hsley, a spastic from the Reading Work Centre who was one of the group of young disabled and young inventors of aids for the disabled on the exchange visit.

Mary's work is already well known, for she has designed Christmas cards for the Society and her "Good Shepherd" was a best seller.

"Girl and a Butterfly,"

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executed in wax crayon and water colour, was one of her best pieces. It took her nearly three months attending art lessons once a week.

"I am glad it was chosen, because I am always pleased to help the Society," she said.

And President Heinemann was just as glad to receive the picture, and is sending her the special signed photograph as a "Thank you."

Golden day for Judith

THIS month brings a Red Letter day for a former pupil of The Spastics Society's Craig-y-Parc School, Judith Ann Barker, of Blurton, Stoke-on-Trent.

For on March 8 she will be presented with her Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award, and later this year will go to Buckingham Palace.

Her mother, Mrs. Brenda Barker, said: "We're so proud of her achievement — it has taken her three years to get this gold."

"When she started she couldn't thread a needle—now she goes to a nearby work centre for the physically handicapped and does the most beautiful embroidery."

Judith, who is 19, is severely physically disabled.